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## CHAPTER 18

# Slideshow



BY BRIAN KELLY

### Desktop presentation tools

We will all be familiar with Microsoft PowerPoint, the best-selling example of a desktop presentation authoring tool. But in addition to PowerPoint there are a number of other desktop presentation tools which are popular, including Keynote on the Apple Macintosh and the open source Open Office suite of programmes which includes the Impress application.

These tools are widely used in business and educational contexts when giving presentations, talks and lectures. Many of these applications will be bundled with desktop computer systems or will be available on an organisation's local area network. In light of this mature environment is there a role for Web-based solutions? This is the question which will be addressed in this Chapter.

### What can the web offer?

The Web can be used as a repository of files, allowing them to be downloaded using a Web browser. A simple use of the Web is to provide access to slide presentations. Provided the Web server is suitably configured (to give an appropriate MIME type) clicking on a Microsoft Power-Point

file, for example, will download the file to the local computer and, if Microsoft PowerPoint is available locally, load the file.

This approach will not work if Microsoft PowerPoint is not available locally (possibly including mobile devices) or if firewalls block downloading of non-native file formats. In order to overcome such problems it may be desirable to convert the slide show to HTML format. Many desktop presentation authoring tools allow this to be done easily, although it should be noted that using Microsoft PowerPoint it is recommended that the file is converted into a HTML format that can be read by all browsers and not just Internet Explorer.

### Slideshows on the web

Although easy to do, using the Web simply to download slideshows has its limitations: there is no community based around a presentation and the presentation cannot be easily embedded into other Web resources.

Web-based slideshow services overcome such limitations by embracing a number of Web 2.0 characteristics. Typically a slideshow will:

- Allow users to comment on the slides in a community area.

- Allow users to bookmark ('favourite') slideshows.
- Allow users to assign tags to slideshows.
- Allow users to embed the presentation in other Web resources.

Such useful services for end users can also provide benefits to the author of the presentation:

- Authors can receive feedback on their presentations.
- Authors can maximise the impact of their ideas by allowing their presentations to be reused elsewhere.
- Authors can receive statistics on usage of their presentations.

## Slideshare

A well-known example of a Web-based presentation service is Slideshare (<http://www.slideshare.net/>) which has been listed as one of the Top 100 Tools by Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies since 2007. An example of a Slideshare presentation is shown in Figure 18.1.

The following features should be noted:

- The toolbar at the top of the screen

allows the presentation to be shared with others via email); added to the user's list of favourite presentations or downloaded to the user's local PC.

- The **Post To** toolbar at the bottom of the screen which allows the presentation currently being viewed to be easily described in a blog post (on Blogger and WordPress); included in a Twitter post; uploaded to the Facebook social networking service or bookmarked in del.icio.us.
- The area on the right provides access to information supplied by the content creator (or the person who uploaded the resource). This includes statistics on use of the slideshow, including direct views in the Slideshare environment and views of the slideshow if it has been embedded within other Web resources. This also provides access to the HTML code which allows the slideshow to be embedded in other Web pages, blogs, etc.

The popularity of Slideshare can be seen from the display of the author's most popular presentations (Fig. 18.2). If these presentations had been made available

The screenshot shows a Slideshare presentation page. At the top is a navigation bar with links like 'HOME', 'BROWSE', 'COMMUNITY', 'WIDGETS', 'BUSINESS', and an 'UPLOAD' button. A search bar is on the right. The main content area displays a presentation slide titled 'From Web Accessibility 2.0 to Web Adaptability (1.0)' by Brian Kelly, UKOLN. The slide text includes an 'Acceptable Use Policy' and contact details. To the right of the slide, there are statistics (1899 views, 0 favs, 3 embeds) and an 'Embed' code. Below the slide, there are social media sharing options (Post to, Blogger, WordPress, Twitter, Facebook, Delicious) and a 'more share options' link. On the right side of the page, there are sections for 'Related Presentations', 'More by user', and 'Sponsor Your Content'. The bottom of the page shows '0 comments' and 'Notes on slide 1'.

Figure 18.1. Slideshare Example

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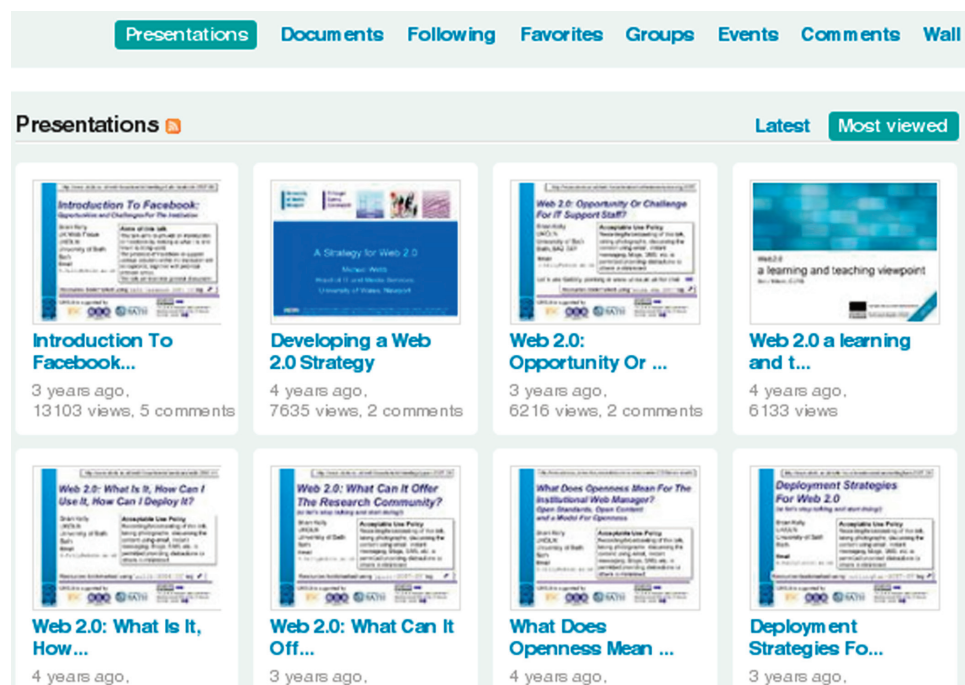


Figure 18.2. The Author's Most Popular Presentations on Slideshare

only on the author's institutional Web site they would not have achieved the high numbers of views.

### Additional Slideshare features

The most popular slideshow, entitled "Introduction To Facebook: Opportunities and Challenges For The Institution", is also a 'Slidecast'. This is a term used by Slideshare to describe a presentation which has an accompanying audio track. Typically this is the talk which accompanies the slides, which is synchronised with the individual slides.

It should also be noted that a plugin to integrate Microsoft PowerPoint directly with the Slideshare service is available. This allows presentations to be uploaded directly from the PowerPoint tool. In addition resources on Slideshare can be managed directly and Slideshare statistics can be viewed from within PowerPoint.

Presentations hosted in Slideshare can also be accessed from a number of social networking services. The Facebook and LinkedIn services, for example, have plugins

which allow Slideshare presentations to be viewed from within the social network. This enables information about your presentations to be easily accessed via your contacts on these social networking services, as well as allowing you to view slides uploaded by your contacts.

Slides hosted on Slideshare can also be grouped into a 'presentation pack'. A presentation pack widget can then allow a group of related slideshows to be embedded on other Web resources.

### Best practices

No matter which Slideshow service you use there are a number of issues you will need to address in order to make effective use of the services.

**Rights:** Do you have permission to upload the slideshow? You should not upload files to slideshows services if you do not have permission of the copyright holder.

**Downloads:** Will end users be able to download the presentation or just view it within the slideshow environment? If you

wish others to be able to access the master file, perhaps to edit it and reuse it you should allow the file to be downloaded from the slideshow repository.

**Creative Commons licence:** If you wish to maximise the impact of the ideas provided in your slides you may wish to make the slides available under a Creative Commons licence.

**Tags:** If you wish your slides to be easily found you should make use of tags which other users are likely to use for searching for resources.

**Metadata:** As well as tags describing the content of the slideshow you can also provide additional metadata. As can be seen from Figure 18.1 the author uses the description field in Slideshare to give a summary of when the slides were presented as well providing details about the author and his host institution.

**Groups:** If a slideshow is part of a set of related presentations, such as presentations given at a conference, the Group facility which is available in services such as Slideshare can be used to group together the related presentations.

**Long term persistence:** There are risks in hosting slides on third party Web services. What happens if the service goes out of business, becomes unreliable or changes its terms and conditions? The approach taken by the author is to make use of a service which appears to be financially viable and has a thriving community of users. In addition slides which are uploaded to the service will contain details of the location of a master copy of the slides, as can be seen in Figure 18.1.

## Conclusions

This Chapter has given an introduction to slideshow services and described Slideshare, the leading provider in this area. The author is a long-standing user of Slideshare which enables his presentations, in the areas of Web 2.0, standards and Web accessibility, to be accessed more widely and reused more easily by others.

It should be noted that in addition to Slideshow services there are also now an increasing number of Web-based slide creations services available, such as Acrobat.com Presentations, Google Presentations (which is part of the Google Docs suite) and Prezi. Such services may have an important role to play as the use of Web-based application services becomes more prevalent. In this environment the richness provided by slideshow repository services will be more closely integrated with the creation of the slides themselves.

## Resources, links, etc.

Slideshare, <<http://www.slideshare.net/>>

CLPT (n.d.). Top 100 Tools, Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies, <<http://www.c4lpt.co.uk/Top100Tools/slideshare.html>>

From Web Accessibility 2.0 to Web Adaptability (1.0), Brian Kelly, <<http://www.slideshare.net/lisbk/from-web-accessibility-20-to-web-adaptability-10>>

The Author's Most Popular Presentations on Slideshare, Brian Kelly, <<http://www.slideshare.net/lisbk/presentations?order=popular>>

Introduction To Facebook: Opportunities and Challenges For The Institution, Brian Kelly, <<http://www.slideshare.net/lisbk/introduction-to-facebook-opportunities-and-challenges-for-the-institution>>

Presentation Pack, Slideshare, <<http://www.slideshare.net/widgets>>

Presentations, Adobe.com, <<http://labs.adobe.com/technologies/presentations/>>

Google Docs, Google <<http://docs.google.com/>>

Prezi, <<http://www.prezi.com/>>

